



For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families since 1948.

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Coronavirus Update from the CEO

Dear Members of The Arc Family:

The progress in COVID response that began last month continues as we move into February, 2021 and that progress has been notably experienced at The Arc of Essex County. The expanded and clarified 1A vaccine eligibility category for our community has greatly improved access and the state's partnership with Walmart and Walgreens has been very successful for our Arc Essex family. All but 12 of the 136 individuals in our residential services have received the first vaccine dose through the Walmart Pod Program. Residents were scheduled at either the Walmart in Boonton, or the Walmart in Garfield and, with great support from all involved, 124 vaccines were distributed! The Walgreens program required The Arc of Essex to organize and operate a 1-day "clinic" for our consumers, staff, volunteers, and family caregivers. Our West Caldwell day program facility was turned into a vaccine clinic where three teams of pharmacists and technicians distributed 168 vaccines. The Arc Essex staff that organized the event and manned the operation that day were stellar! The DDD/DHS Quest COVID testing program has also been in use at The Arc of Essex County as we make every effort to stay on top of any COVID activity in order to keep our residents and staff safe and healthy.

We continue to work hard to provide updated and relevant communication about resources and opportunities for staff, consumers, and families. Information changes almost daily, but we remain committed to keep up with the most recent guidance from all partners and implement the most prudent strategies to mitigate risk and protect health and safety for all. Although there are no changes to the State's COVID restriction

guidelines for DDD services, we are more than ready to pivot back to additional in-person services when they are relaxed. For now, we are focusing on managing vaccine distribution for staff and consumers, and activities that keep everyone connected and engaged.

The health, safety, and happiness of our service participants, their families, and our staff are of the utmost importance. We can focus on these efforts thanks to the hard work and dedication of the entire Arc Essex family. We remain steadfast in our commitment to all opportunities that support our Arc family, for today and for the future.

Thank you, all. Stay safe and be well.



Linda C. Lucas
Chief Executive Officer

Updates:

- Adult Day Programs remain closed as per DDD; no opening date is available.
- Community Based Supports and HAP continue with in-person services supporting a few individuals (CBS) and families (HAP) to engage in community activities.
- Camp hope general registration for summer 2021 will open on February 2/15/2021.
- DHS/DDD COVID testing program for residential consumers and staff to end 2/26/2021.
- [1A category for COVID vaccine including group home residents and staff, expanded.](#)
- DDD/DHS and the Department of Health partnered with Walmart to distribute vaccines to group home residents. All but 12 of individuals in our residential services have received the first dose of the vaccine through this program; all second doses scheduled.
- Arc Essex, in partnership with Walgreens, organized a "clinic" on 1/27/21 and was able to provide 168 vaccines to eligible participants.

Current Status of Programs and Services:

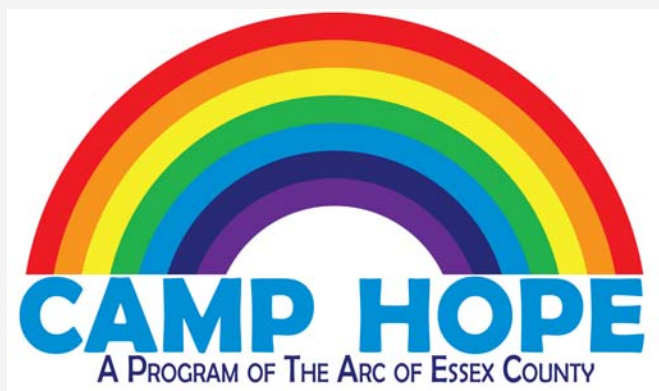
- Shapiro Center for Early Intervention: In-person and telehealth services continue
- Stepping Stones School: In-person classes continue; 100% remote option continues
- Stepping Stones Early Intervention: Virtual sessions continue into spring
- Children Group Respite and Recreation Programs: In-person activities authorized to resume with restrictions; plans in development
- Adult Day Programs: Closed; no opening date available; virtual activities continue
- Community Based Supports and Individual Respite: Limited options available
- Virtual activities calendars continue to increase and expand for at-home and residential home consumers on www.arcessex.org; virtual billing continues

2021 Camp Hope Applications Available

This Month

The Arc of Essex County is currently accepting returning camper applications for the 2021 camp season which will run from June 28 - August 13, 2021. The Arc will begin accepting new camper applications on February 15.

Only digital applications will be accepted this year and can be completed on desktop or



mobile devices. Visit the [Camp Hope website](https://www.arcessex.org/camp-hope) to apply. Applications will be processed as they are received. For application questions, contact Laurie Best at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1264 or camphope@arcessex.org.

Do you know someone interested in working at Camp Hope this summer? The Arc of Essex County is seeking experienced candidates for the following positions:

- Certified Life Guards
- Counselors
- Camp Nurse
- 1:1 Behavioral Counselors

Staff hours are Monday through Friday from approximately 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Position requirements vary. To view job requirements and to apply, visit www.arccamphope.com/get-involved/. For employment questions, contact Human Resources at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1256 or hrdepartment@arcessex.org.

Share the Love

with an Arc Candygram!

This Valentine's Day, celebrate by sending a Dove Chocolate candygram to your friends, family, and favorite staff at The Arc while supporting a great cause! Purchase one of two options with both featuring hand-drawn, personalized cards by residents of The Arc and delicious, assorted Dove chocolates.

Delivery is included to Arc programs or the Stepping Stones School.

Contactless pick up in Livingston is also available. **Orders must be received by Monday, February 8.** Pick up orders will be available on Thursday, February 11 or Friday, February 12 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at The Arc's Main Office. For additional information, visit

www.arcessex.org/candygram.



Additional Self-Advocacy

Opportunities Introduced

Following record participation in the 2020 election, The Arc of Essex County built upon the energy and momentum among program attendees to make a bigger mark on their world by expanding self-advocacy offerings. Since November, two homes at a time attend virtual, interactive sessions to learn the concepts and skills related to improving their self-advocacy efforts.

Since joining the virtual advocacy club, residents and day program participants have learned basic terminology and concepts, as well as how to recognize the advocacy they are already implementing in their day-to-day life. As the sessions continue, participants will explore other topics including understanding one's rights, identifying values and interests, learning about different levels of government, practical advocacy in program and community settings, personal and collective goal setting. They will then put these new skills to use.



The Arc of Essex County is committed to providing dynamic services and supports by leveraging technology and practicing social distancing. Our full virtual programming calendars are available online at www.arcessex.org/virtual.

If your loved one is interested in joining our Day Programs activities, including self-advocacy offerings, contact Director of Adult Day Services Angela LoSapio at alosapio@arcessex.org. For Adult Recreation & Respite virtual gatherings, contact Director of Community Services, Maureen Murray at mmurray@arcessex.org.

The Arc of Essex County Offers COVID-19

Vaccination Clinic

On Wednesday, January 27th, The Arc of Essex County, in partnership with Walgreens, hosted a COVID-19 vaccination clinic at its West Caldwell Hub Day Program. Throughout the day, 168 program attendees, staff, and families received their first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. These individuals joined 124 residents of The Arc of Essex County who had already been vaccinated through a partnership with Walmart.



Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, specifically Down syndrome, are included in the Centers for Disease Control's list of most vulnerable to the unprecedented pandemic. Thanks to the state of New Jersey for prioritizing vaccinations for vulnerable populations as well as direct support professionals, members of The Arc family were able to get vaccinated and will receive their second dose in a few weeks.

The Arc of Essex County Receives \$29,400 CDBG Grant

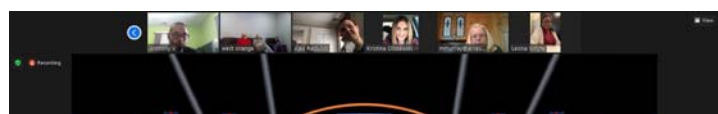
from Essex County

The Arc of Essex County recently received a \$29,400 grant from the Essex County Division of Housing and Community Development for the purchase of a new, wheelchair accessible vehicle. The 2020 community development block grant (CDBG) was used to purchase a 12-person vehicle that features track seating giving The Arc flexibility to accommodate more wheelchair-bound passengers, when needed.



The Arc of Essex County would like to thank the Essex County Division of Housing and Community Development for their ongoing support and commitment to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Residents Compete in Agency-wide



Family Feud Match

Beginning late last month and extending through the end of March, the residents of The Arc of Essex County's group homes and supervised apartments are competing against one another in a heated Family Feud competition. Structured like the game show namesake and facilitated by the Recreation and Respite department, the competition features two matches a week until a winner emerges.



Virtual Family Feud competitions gained popularity as part of the Recreation and Respite program's weekly game day offering. With buy in from each residential program, the agency-wide competition hatched. We cannot wait to see who will claim the title of champion next month – be sure to tune into our social media channels for competition updates in the coming weeks.

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The Arc of Essex County's Residential Corner

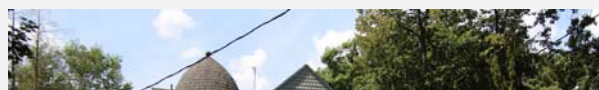
February Openings

For individuals seeking a community living placement, The Arc of Essex County has the following February 2021 openings:



NEW! Cedar Grove Group Home

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 5-Bedroom Group Home
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large Single Family Home Located in a Quiet Cedar Grove Neighborhood
- Current roommates are males ranging in age from early 30's to early 60's. They enjoy spending time as a group playing board games and pursuing individual interests including playing with their Wii gaming system and watching DVDs. They also enjoy all their community has to offer including going to the movies, dining out, bowling, carnivals, parties, and more (pre-covid).





Bloomfield Group Home

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 6-Bedroom Group Home
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large Single-Family Home in a Great Bloomfield Neighborhood
- Can accommodate residents with additional medical supports and aging needs
- Current roommates range in age from late 30's to late 60's. They enjoy spending time as a group celebrating birthdays and holidays, taking trips to Atlantic City, the bowling alley, and movie theater (pre-covid), and pursuing individual hobbies.



Branchbrook Supervised Apartments (1 Male Vacancy)

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 3-Bedroom Supervised Apartment
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large Single-Family Home with a Great Backyard and Walking Distance to Branch Brook Park
- Current roommates are males ranging in age from late 30's to late 60's. They enjoy spending time participating in community activities like the annual Cherry Blossom Festival, motor bike shows, and more. They continue to learn new skills with an emphasis on self-advocacy and communication abilities to identify and work towards their dreams.



South Orange Supportive Living Apartment (1 Female Vacancy)

- 1 bedroom available in a 2 bedroom apartment
- Minimal community living support needs
- Access to an emergency on-call system for added safety 24 hours a day
- Apartment-style living in 5-floor building with elevator
- Located steps from public transportation and South Orange's vibrant downtown

For additional information about The Arc of Essex County's residential services, [click here](#). If you are interested in pursuing independent living at one of the above properties, please contact The Arc's Senior Director of Residential Services, Rebecca Lorusso via email at rlorusso@arcessex.org or by calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1270.

Remembering Members of The Arc Family

Phillip Milici joined The Arc of Essex County family as a young boy when he began attending Camp Hope. He would later enroll in The Arc's day programs and become a 30-year resident, most recently calling the Cedar Grove group home, home. Phillip was well known for his enthusiastic hugs, embracing his family, friends, and many staff who had the privilege of knowing him. He enjoyed bowling, listening to Elvis Presley, socializing with his peers, watching westerns, comedies and action movies, and owned an exceptionally large DVD collection. He will be missed.

Heaven'Lee Glover joined The Arc of Essex County when she and her family enrolled in the Shapiro Center for Early Intervention in July 2019. Although born at 25 weeks gestation, Heaven'Lee was a strong willed, spirited little girl who always had a smile for everyone. Heaven'Lee's care team including physical, speech, and occupational therapists, a child development specialist, and her social worker are devastated by her unexpected loss.

Robert "Murph" Murphy joined The Arc of Essex County more than 30 years ago when he became a driver for The Arc's Day Services and Respite programs. There was not a task he ever turned down and could often be found working and helping in other departments at The Arc. A quiet man, Mr. Murphy had many close relationships with staff and consumers alike. He leaves a void in The Arc of Essex County family cannot be filled.

The Arc of Essex County conveys its condolences to the Milici, Glover, and Murphy families and their extended Arc family during this difficult time. If you would like to make a donation to The Arc of Essex County in their memory, please visit www.arcessex.org/donate and note that your donation is in memory of Phillip, Heaven'Lee, or Mr. Murphy – an acknowledgement of your tribute will be sent to family members.

Stay Connected!



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